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*BENGAL DISTRICT GAZETTEERS.*

PATNA

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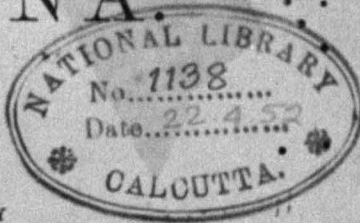
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DISTRICT GAZETTEERS

PATNA

BY

L. S. S. O'MALLEY,

INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE.



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## PREFACE.

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I DESIRE to acknowledge my obligation to Mr. J. G. Cumming, I.C.S., formerly Collector of Patna, for materials which have been used in compiling this volume. I am also indebted to Mr. W. R. Bright, I.C.S., C.S.I., Opium Agent, Bihar, and Mr. W. B. Thomson, I.C.S., Collector of Patna, for the ready assistance they have given me.

L. S. S. O'M.



## PLAN OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGES
I. PHYSICAL ASPECTS . . . . .	1—14
II. HISTORY . . . . .	15—40
III. THE PEOPLE . . . . .	41—57
IV. RELIGIONS . . . . .	58—77
V. PUBLIC HEALTH . . . . .	78—88
VI. AGRICULTURE . . . . .	89—102
VII. IRRIGATION . . . . .	103—111
VIII. NATURAL CALAMITIES . . . . .	112—119
IX. RENTS, WAGES AND PRICES . . . . .	120—132
X. OCCUPATIONS, MANUFACTURES AND TRADE . . . . .	133—144
XI. MEANS OF COMMUNICATION . . . . .	145—149
XII. LAND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION . . . . .	150—156
XIII. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION . . . . .	157—165
XIV. LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT . . . . .	166—171
XV. EDUCATION . . . . .	172—178
XVI. GAZETTEER . . . . .	179—224
INDEX . . . . .	225—236

# TABLE OF CONTENTS.

## CHAPTER I.

### PHYSICAL ASPECTS.

	PAGES
GENERAL DESCRIPTION—Boundaries—Natural configuration—Natural divisions—Scenery—HILL SYSTEM—RIVER SYSTEM—Ganges—Son—Pānpān—Morhar and Dardhā—Phalgu—Majthue—Panchāna—Sakri—GEOLOGY—BOTANY—FAUNA—Game Birds—Fish—CLIMATE—Temperature and humidity—Winds—Rainfall	1-14

## CHAPTER II.

### HISTORY.

GENERAL FEATURES—THE PRÆHISTORIC PERIOD—EARLY HISTORY—Rise of Buddhism—Rise of Jainism—FOUNDATION OF PATALIPUTRA—Maurya dynasty—Megasthenes' account—Municipal administration—Influx of foreigners—Spread of Jainism—Spread of Buddhism—Asoka—Gupta empire—Fall of Pataliputra—Invasion of the Tibetans—The Pāla kings—THE MUHAMMADAN CONQUEST—Foundation of Patna—Dāūd Khān's rebellion—MUHAMMADAN GOVERNORS—European Settlements—Marāthā and Afghān raids—The sack of Patna—Rebellion of Sirāj-ud-daula—Invasion of Shāh Ālam—The massacre of Patna—Final conquest of Patna—THE MUTINY—ARCHÆOLOGY	15-40
---	-------

## CHAPTER III.

### THE PEOPLE.

GROWTH OF THE POPULATION—Early estimates—Census of 1872, 1881 and 1891—Census of 1901—GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS—Density of population—Migration—Proportion of sexes—Towns and villages—Village officials—Dress—Houses—Food—Language—Magabi—Other languages—Character of the people—RELIGIONS—PRINCIPAL CASTES—Goālas—Kurmās—Bābhāns—Dōsūdhās—Kahārs—Koiris—Rājputs—Chamārs—Telis—Brāhmins—Musahars—Pāsīs—Dhānūs—Kāndus—Hajjāms—Barhis—Kēyāshts—SOCIAL AND POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS—Newspapers	41-57
---	-------

## CHAPTER IV.

### RELIGIONS.

GENERAL ASPECTS—TRACES OF BUDDHISM—JAINISM—HINDUISM—Popular beliefs—Worship of Kālī—Religious movements—Anti-kine-killing agitation—Ploughmen's begging movement—The tree-daubing mystery—Shree Narayānis—Kādīs—MUHAMMADANS—Veneration of saints—Ghāzi Mīrān's fair—Mallikis—Sunnis and Shiāhs—The Wahābi movement—Sikhs—CHRISTIAN MISSIONS—Jesuit Mission—Capuchin Mission—Other Missions	58-77
--	-------

## TABLE OF CONTENTS.

## CHAPTER V.

## PUBLIC HEALTH.

	PAGES
VITAL STATISTICS—Infant mortality—PRINCIPAL DISEASES—Fever—Plague —Cholera—Dysentery and diarrhoea—Infective zepetting—Small-pox— Respiratory diseases—Infirmities—SANITATION—VACCINATION—MEDICAL INSTITUTIONS	75—88

## CHAPTER VI.

## AGRICULTURE.

GENERAL CONDITIONS—Natural divisions— <i>Dēra</i> lands—The upland tract— The lowland tract— <i>Bihār</i> subdivisions—Soils—Rainfall—Irrigation— PRINCIPAL CROPS—Rice—Other kinds of rice— <i>Bhadoi</i> crops—Maize— <i>Marnū</i> — <i>Jowār</i> — <i>Kodo</i> — <i>Rabi</i> crops—Wheat—Barley—Gram—Oilseeds— Castor oil—Other crops—Sugarcane—Poppy—Vegetables and fruits— EXTENSION OF CULTIVATION—IMPROVEMENT OF METHODS—Rotation —Manures—Cattle—Veterinary assistance.	89—102
--	--------

## CHAPTER VII.

## IRRIGATION.

INDIGENOUS SYSTEM— <i>Ahars</i> —Irrigation from rivers— <i>Gaurābandi</i> —Wells— Water-lifts—Working of the system—CANAL SYSTEM—Canal admini- stration—Water-rates—STATISTICS OF IRRIGATION	103—111
---	---------

## CHAPTER VIII.

## NATURAL CALAMITIES.

FAMINES—Famine of 1770—Famine of 1866—Famine of 1874—Famine of 1897—Tracts liable to famine—FLOODS—Flood of 1897—Flood of 1901	112—119
---	---------

## CHAPTER IX.

## RENTS, WAGES AND PRICES.

SYSTEMS OF RENT PAYMENT— <i>Bāzū</i> system— <i>Bafū</i> — <i>Dūnūbandi</i> —Customary allowances—Merits of the system— <i>Nagdi</i> system— <i>Nagdi</i> tenures—Rates of rent—Occupancy rights—WAGES—PRICES—Famine prices—MATERIAL CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE—Landlords—Traders—Cultivating classes— INDEBTEDNESS—Labouring classes— <i>Kamigū</i>	120—132
---	---------

# TABLE OF CONTENTS.

xiii

## CHAPTER X.

### OCCUPATIONS, MANUFACTURES AND TRADE.

PAGES

OCCUPATIONS—MANUFACTURES—Opium manufacture—The Opium Factory— Distilleries—Mills—Factories—Mines—Hand industries—Weaving—Glass- ware—Cabinet-ware—Embroidery—Jessamine oil—Stone-carving—Wood- carving—Gold and silver work—Other industries—TRADE—Fairs— Weights and measures . . . . .	133—144
--	---------

## CHAPTER XI.

### MEANS OF COMMUNICATION.

Development of communications—ROADS—Conveyances—RAILWAYS—WATER COMMUNICATIONS—Ferries—Boats—POSTAL COMMUNICATIONS . . . . .	145—149
--	---------

## CHAPTER XII.

### LAND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION.

EARLY ENGLISH ADMINISTRATION—EARLY SETTLEMENTS—ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES—INCREASE OF REVENUE AND ESTATES—LAND TENURES— RELATIONS OF LANDLORDS AND TENANTS—PARGANAS . . . . .	150—156
---	---------

## CHAPTER XIII.

### GENERAL ADMINISTRATION.

ADMINISTRATIVE CHARGES AND STAFF—Public Works Department—Opium Department—REVENUE—Land revenue—Excise—Cesses—Stamps—Income- tax—Registration—ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE—Civil justice—Criminal justice—Crime—Criminal classes—POLICE—JAILS . . . . .	157—165
--	---------

## CHAPTER XIV.

### LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT.

THE DISTRICT BOARD—Income—Expenditure—LOCAL BOARDS—MUNICIPALI- TIES—Patna—Barr—Bihar—Dinapore—Khagaul . . . . .	166—171
--	---------

## CHAPTER XV.

### EDUCATION.

PROGRESS OF EDUCATION—Literate population—EUROPEAN EDUCATION— St. Michael's School, Kurj—INDIAN EDUCATION—Patna College—Bihar National College—Secondary Education—High schools—Middle schools— Primary education—Special schools—Bihar School of Engineering—Temple Medical School—Muhammadian education—Female education—Hostels and boarding houses—LIBRARIES . . . . .	172—179
---	---------

## CHAPTER XVI.

## GAZETTEER.

## PAGES

Atsarrai—Azimābād—Balkanthpur—Bakhtiyārpur—Bānka Ghāt—Bankipore— Bankipore Subdivision—Bargāon—Bārā—Bārā Subdivision—Bhagwan- ganj—Bihār—Bihār Subdivision—Bihār Town—Bihtā—Digba Ghāt— Dinapore—Dinapore Subdivision—Fatwā—Ghosrawān—Giriak—Hilsā— Islāmpur—Jagdispur—Jethull—Khagsaul—Kerji—Magadha—Maner— Mokāmeh—Nālanda—Patna City—Patna City Subdivision—Pāwapur— Pānpūr—Rājgir—Sillāo—Telācha—Tetrāwān—Vikramasilā . . . . .	179—224
INDEX . . . . .	225—236



# GAZETTEER

## OF THE

# PATNA DISTRICT.

### CHAPTER I.

#### PHYSICAL ASPECTS.

THE district of Patna, the north-eastern district of the portion of the Patna Division lying south of the Ganges, is situated between  $24^{\circ} 57'$  and  $25^{\circ} 44'$  north latitude, and between  $84^{\circ} 42'$  and  $86^{\circ} 4'$  east longitude. It extends over an area of 2,075 square miles, and contains a population, according to the census of 1901, of 1,624,985 souls. The district is named after its principal town, Patna, situated on the Ganges in  $25^{\circ} 37' N.$  and  $85^{\circ} 10' E.$ , which adjoins Bankipore, the civil station and administrative headquarters. The name Patna appears to mean simply the great city or the city *par excellence*. GENERAL DESCRIPTION.

The district is bounded on the north by the Ganges, which separates it from the districts of Saran, Muzaffarpur and Monghyr; on the south by the Gayā district; on the east by Monghyr; and on the west by the river Son, which separates it from the district of Shahābād. Boundaries.

In shape, it roughly resembles a parallelogram, its length from west to east being considerably greater than its breadth from north to south. With the exception of a small area of hill and jungle in the south-east, it consists of an alluvial tract, sloping gently to the Ganges on the north, and intersected by numerous streams and rivers. The general line of drainage is from south-west to north-east, but along the southern bank of the Ganges there is a strip of high ground 4 or 5 miles broad, which diverts eastwards the rivers coming south from the Gayā district; and in consequence of this obstacle to the natural drainage, the low-lying country immediately to the south is under water in the rains. In the south-east the district is for some 30 miles divided Natural configuration.

from the district of Gayā by the Rājgir Hills, which run in a south-westerly direction from Giriak.

Natural  
divisions.

The district may therefore be roughly divided into three separate tracts. To the north is a narrow strip of somewhat high ground along the banks of the Ganges, a peculiarly fertile tract producing magnificent crops. To the south-east the country is more elevated, and here the Rājgir Hills rise above the surrounding level. The remainder of the district is a wide alluvial plain of great natural fertility, which slopes gently to the north and is devoid of natural eminences.

Scenery.

With the exception of the Rājgir Hills and a solitary hill rising from the open plain near Bihār town, the general aspect of the district is that of an almost unbroken level diversified only by groves of mango and palm trees. The greater part of this tract is singularly fertile, being watered by the streams which descend from the Chotā Nāgpur plateau to join the Ganges, and but little jungle is left except near the banks of the Son and in the southern hills. In the hot weather the country is a wide expanse of dry dusty sun-baked fields, but in the rains it is covered with waving crops of rice—the Patna rice of European commerce, for which the district was famous as early as the 7th century, when the Chinese pilgrim, Hiuen Tsiang, noted that the country grew an unusual kind of rice. It is, he said, of a delicious flavour, and is commonly called “rice for the use of the great”; and he solemnly related a legend that a heretic king was converted to Buddhism by its fragrant scent. On the whole, the scenery is tame and monotonous, the dead level being broken only by the villages, surrounded in the cold weather by fields of white poppy, and by the long swaying *lathās* or water-lifts which form a prominent feature in the landscape. To the south-east the scenery is entirely different. Here the rugged line of the Rājgir Hills stretches far away to the south-west, a long range breaking into many detached spurs and peaks, clothed with thick jungle and interspersed with masses of rock.

HILL  
SYSTEM.

The Rājgir Hills are the only hills in the district. They form part of a long range extending from near Bodh Gayā north-eastwards for a distance of 40 miles until they terminate abruptly at Giriak, where their base is washed by the Panchāna river. They are of no great height, seldom attaining an altitude of more than 1,000 feet, but at Handia hill on the boundary of the district they rise to a height of 1,472 feet. Their sides are rugged and precipitous, and are mostly covered with dense jungle and thick low brushwood, broken only by irregular pathway strewn with rocks.

Starting from Girīak, two parallel ranges of hills stretch away to the south-west, enclosing a narrow ravine, through which a rivulet called the Bawan Ganga rushes down in cascades and rapids to join the Panchāna. To the south of the village of Rājgir the two ranges broaden out and enclose a valley, in which the ancient city of Rājagṛīha was built. The northern range here rises into a peak of inconsiderable height known as Ratnagiri, from which 2 spurs diverge at right angles, one descending southwards across the defile leading to Girīak, while the other strikes off to the north-west and joins the Vipulagiri peak. To the west of the latter peak the valley is entered by a narrow ravine, through which a stream called the Sarasvatī forces its way into the low country at the foot of the hills. The range then pursues a south-westerly direction for some 3 miles till it attains a considerable elevation at a hill called Baibhār, where the southern range again approaches it. The south-eastern corner of the Rājgir valley is marked by the Udayagiri peak which throws out a spur to the north to meet that coming southwards from Vipulagiri. To the west the hill sinks into a defile, beyond which is a high hill called Sonagiri, opposite the Baibhār Hill. At this point the two ranges again resume their south-westerly course, and again enclose a narrow ravine overgrown with jungle.\*

Besides these hills, there is a small isolated hill, called Pīrpahāri, rising abruptly from the plain at the north-east of Bihār town. The southern slope of this hill is gradual, owing to the boulders, which form a natural staircase, but the northern side consists of a precipitous cliff with numerous rocks scattered along it.

To the north, the Ganges flows along the whole length of the district from west to east, and the Son marks its boundary on the west. The other rivers intersect the district from south-west to north-east. They all flow due northwards from the Gayā district, and take a sharp turn to the east or north-east soon after crossing the boundary; with the exception of the Pūnpūn, none of them join the Ganges as long as it bounds this district, being deflected eastwards by a strip of high land along its southern bank. None of them are of any great size, and the greater part of the water brought down is diverted into irrigation channels and reservoirs, and distributed among the fields, so that their main channels are mere dried-up beds for the greater part of the year: in fact, only the Pūnpūn, Morhar and Panchāna contain any

\* See also the map facing p. 216.



volume of water. This is particularly the case in the south-east of the district, where the streams and rivers are mostly used up in a network of *pains* or artificial channels, expending themselves before reaching the Ganges or mingling in a huge swampy depression in the Bārī subdivision. The whole of the country to the south of Bārī is very low, but the strip of high land along the Ganges effectually prevents any of these streams entering the Ganges. They meander about in a confusing manner, known by different names till the necessities of irrigation and the dryness of the season leave nothing but tortuous sandy beds to mark the direction of their courses. Their beds are sandy, and the banks in general low and sloping, so that when they come down in flood during the rainy season, the adjacent country is inundated, but part of the water finds an exit by the Maithun or Kuluhar river.

*Ganges.* The Ganges forms the northern boundary of the district from the confluence of its waters with the Son on the west up to the village of Dumrā on the east, its total length in Patna being 93 miles. The channel of this great river is continually shifting, and as it oscillates from side to side, islands are formed one year and disappear the next, so that any account of its course is liable to periodical correction. At the present day the confluence of the Ganges with the Son is about 6 miles north-west of Dinapore and about 6 miles north of Maner, near the village of Hardī Chaprā; and the river flows thence in a single stream to Dinapore with considerable tracts of *diāra* or alluvial land along its southern bank. Opposite the Dinapore cantonments there is a wide stretch of *diāra* separated from the permanent bank by a side channel from the Son, which passes through Maner, Lodipur, Sherpur and Dāūdpur, and meets the Ganges at Nāsriganj; this channel dries up in places in the hot season, but is a navigable stream during the rains. At Digha, 3 miles east of Dinapore, the Patna-Gayā Canal enters the Ganges, which continues to flow in a single stream to Sabalpur, 1 mile east of Damriāhi, *via* Adrak Ghāt in Patna city, receiving the waters of a small branch of the Gandak river about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles north-west of Adrak Ghāt,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles below Harihar Chatra, the site of the Sonpur fair, and about  $\frac{1}{2}$  miles below the railway bridge over the Gandak. The main channel runs in close to the city buildings at Coloneganj; and east of this point trading vessels can approach the city markets at any period of the year.

Near Damriāhi Ghāt the Ganges divides into two channels, enclosing an island, 5 miles in length and 2 miles in breadth, which comprises the *diāras* of Himmatpur, Barīfampur, Jethulī,

Maksūdpur and Baikānthpur. The southern channel leaves the permanent bank at Jethulī and runs straight eastward by the side of a large *diāra*, about 4 miles long and 2 miles broad, on the north of Fatwā, and then meets the northern channel, receiving the waters of Pūnpūn at Kurthā. At a very short distance from the point of junction, the main stream again divides into two channels, enclosing a large island about 12 miles long and 3 miles broad, forming the *diāras* of Jorāwanpur, Bīrpur, Rupaspur, Rāmnagar, Karautā and Malahī. The main northern channel receives the waters of the main stream of the Gandak at Bīrpur, and divides into two streams at a distance of 3 miles from Bīrpur, enclosing an island *diāra* called Rupaspur and Rāmnagar. The southern channel runs close to the bank, and passing through Kalā *diāra*, Karautā Ghāt, Bakhtiyārpur Ghāt and Athmalgolā Ghāt, meets the northern channel at Malahī, whence the river flows in a single channel to Mekrā *diāra* *via* Bārī. From Mekrā the channel abandons the permanent bank, leaving a *diāra*, 1 to 2 miles broad, at Dariyāpur, where it again resumes the original bed along the permanent bank. At mile 62 of the Fatwā-Barhiyā road, the channel divides into two streams, the southern being the main channel, which again divides into two at Dumrā on the eastern boundary of the district.

The Ganges, as is well known, is a sacred river, which has been deified under the name of Gangā Mai. In Patna the Hindus bring her offerings of flowers and sweetmeats, and occasionally of goats, which are thrown alive into the river and taken away by the fishing and boating caste of Mallāhs. Rich men also propitiate her by hanging cloths over the whole width of the channel from one bank to the other, these offerings being the perquisites of a special class of Brāhmins called Gangāputras. One curious form of worship observed by some ascetics may be mentioned here—the penance of *jalsuin* practised in the month of Māgh (January-February), *i.e.*, at the coldest time of the year. Four bamboo posts are driven down deep in the water and a small platform is built on them; and here the ascetic sits throughout the night, engrossed in prayer and meditation, stark naked, and shivering with cold.

Next in importance to the Ganges is the Son, which forms the boundary between Patna and Shāhābād. It enters the district at Mahābalipur and flows thence in a northerly direction for 41 miles till it joins the Ganges, the point of junction being near the village of Hardī Chaprā. The river flows in an undivided channel till it is crossed by the East Indian Railway bridge at Koelwār, a few miles south of its confluence with the

Ganges, and then divides into two streams, enclosing a small but fertile island. It receives no tributaries in this district, the line of drainage being away from its banks.

The most noticeable feature of the Son in this portion of its course is the meagre stream of water it brings down at ordinary times, as compared with its vast size and violence at periods of flood. Seen in the dry season, about April or May, the bed presents a wide stretch of drifting sand, striped by land-locked pools, with a small stream of water meandering from bank to bank. But in the rainy season, and especially after a storm has burst on the plateau of Central India, the river presents an extraordinary contrast. It drains a hill area of 21,300 square miles, and is the channel by which the rainfall of this enormous catchment basin has to find an outlet. The result is that after heavy rain the river rises with great rapidity, and being unable to carry off the vast volume of water brought down, the flood waters spill over its broad bed, and occasionally cause inundations in the low-lying plains on either side. These heavy floods are, however, of short duration, hardly ever lasting more than four days, after which the river rapidly sinks to its usual level.

The Son is a river of no mean historical interest, as it is probably identical with the Erannoboas, which is mentioned by Megasthenes as "the third river in all India and inferior to none but the Indus and Ganges, into the latter of which it discharges its waters." Erannoboas appears a manifest corruption of the Sanskrit *Hiranyabāhu* or golden armed, a name formerly given to the river and apparently derived, like the name Son or river of gold, from the golden colour of the sand it brings down in flood. It formerly flowed far to the east, and in this district followed the present course of the Pūnpūn. After being joined by the Morhar, it pursued a north-easterly direction as far as Chilibil, south of Phulwāri and close to the present Dinapore railway station, thence turned east as far as Pāneh Pahāri in Patna city, and then to the south-east, finally joining the Ganges at Fatwā. There is a long tract of low ground in this last direction, destitute of trees, which is known by the name of Marā Son, i.e. the dead or deserted Son, which undoubtedly marks the bed of the old channel of the river. The courses of the Ganges and Son would thus have been nearly parallel for many miles, and in the narrow tract lying between the two rivers was situated the famous city of Pataliputra or Palibothra, the ancient capital of Hindustān. In the early centuries of the Christian era, the Son gradually worked westwards, its lower course at length closely approximating its present alignment as far as Phulwāri; and it is probable that

the final catastrophe, in which the Son, instead of turning east at that point, burst across the narrow neck of land dividing it from the Ganges, took place before the year 750 A.D.\*

During the subsequent centuries the river has gradually receded westwards, making new channels for itself, and traces of its old beds are numerous. One of them was, in fact, utilized for the alignment of the Patna-Gayā Canal, and to this day the flood waters of the Son find their way down the old bed known as the Marā Son. Mr. Twining, Collector of Shāhābad in 1801—04, whose jurisdiction included Dinapore, gives an interesting account of such an occurrence, which shows that even 100 years ago the people recognized this as the old channel of the Son. "One day," he writes, "in the middle of the rainy season, a messenger arrived from the General in great haste. He delivered a letter informing me that the waters of the Soane had suddenly come down upon Dinapore; that part of the cantonments was already overflowed; and requesting I would order measures to be taken to stop the inundation. I was informed that the Soane, having risen to a great height, had broken through the right bank and flowed down to the vicinity of Patna, in an old bed of the river in former times. I made further inquiries, and found that the course which the Soane had taken in this irruption was generally recognised in that part of the country as an ancient channel, by which the Soane had reached the Ganges."† In more recent times the Son has steadily been shifting its course. The confluence with the Ganges was formerly at Sherpur, and according to Rennell's Bengal Atlas of 1772 it was at Maner. In the beginning of the 19th century Maner was 3 miles south of the union of the two rivers; and now the Son joins the Ganges 9 miles from Sherpur and 6 miles north of Maner.

To the east of the Son the Pūnpūn enters Patna from the Gayā district near Shāhzādpur, and flows in a north-easterly direction till it approaches near Naubatpur. From this point it turns sharply to the east, crosses the Patna-Gayā Railway about 8 miles south of Bankipore, and joins the Ganges at Fatwā. Its total length in the district is 54 miles. The Pūnpūn is joined by the Morhar and Dardhā, about 9 miles from its junction with the Ganges, and shortly before its confluence with that river some of its waters diverge along a channel, called the Dhoā, which runs

\* Reports of the Archaeological Survey of India, Vol. viii.

† Twining's Travels in India, 1803. The request that the Collector would "order measures to be taken to stop the inundation" would seem to point either to ignorance of the magnitude of Indian floods or to a quaint belief in the power of the civil authorities.



nearly parallel to the Ganges. This river retains water throughout the year, but except in the rains is useless for purposes of navigation owing to the number of irrigation channels (*pais*) which it supplies with water in this district as well as in Gayā, where a huge *bāndh* or dam intercepts the stream. So much of the water is thus diverted that, except in times of high flood, only a small portion reaches the Ganges. At the point of junction the river attains a width of about 100 yards enclosed within high steep banks.

The Pūnpūn is a sacred river, being regarded as the *Ādi Gangā* or original Ganges; and it is the duty of every pilgrim to Gayā to shave his head on its banks and bathe in its waters on his way to the holy city.

Morhar  
and  
Dardhā.

To the east of the Pūnpūn are the Morhar and Dardhā, two branches of the same river, which bifurcates in the Gayā district. Both streams follow a north-easterly direction, and join the Pūnpūn near the same spot; and both are nearly dry during the greater portion of the year, as the cultivators build dams across them, and the water is dispersed among the fields or stored in the artificial reservoirs called *dhars*.

Phalgu.

The Phalgu enters the district a short distance to the south of Telārha, but soon loses its identity, as its waters are almost entirely expended in irrigation channels. Near Telārha it bifurcates, one branch, known as the Sonā, striking due north, and the other, the Kattār, taking a north-easterly direction. Both branches eventually fall into the Maithun river, but are practically dry after the end of the rainy season.

Maithun.

The Maithun or Mithwain, which is formed by the confluence of the Dhoā and Sonā, flows parallel to the Ganges throughout the entire length of the Bārḥ subdivision. Near Chero it is joined by the Jamunā river, and at Tirmohāni by the Dhanain; and thence the united stream flows, under the name of the Kuluhār, into the Monghyr district.

Panchāna.

In the Bihār subdivision the Panchāna is formed by the confluence of 5 streams debouching from the Gayā district, which unite near Giriak and thence flow northwards to Bihār town. Here five small streams branch off to the west, intersecting the town in different places, but all have long since dried up. A great sand bank has formed in the bed of the river below Bihār, which forces its water into the irrigation channels on the east; and the result is that, except in times of flood, only a feeble stream trickles along its sandy bed. After leaving Bihār, it pursues a north-easterly direction and then deflects to the east, eventually joining the Sakrī or Mohāna.

The last river of any importance is the Sakri, which enters the Sakri district to the south-east of Bihār town. This river, which in its upper reaches is called the Mohāna, flows to the north through the Bibār subdivision and then takes a sharp turn to the east through the south-east of the Bārḥ subdivision, from which it enters the Monghyr district. Like the Panchāna, it fails to attain any great volume, owing to the demands made upon it for the purpose of irrigation, nearly all its water being carried away by two large channels constructed on its left bank 12 miles south-east of Bihār. These two *pains* have widened and become large streams, with the result that the greater part of the supply of this river, which extends as far as Lakhisarai in the Monghyr district, has now been diverted. The lower portion of the Sakri below the offtake of these channels is also silting up rapidly as a continually decreasing supply of water passes down it.

The greater part of the district is composed of Gangetic GEOLOGY. alluvium, i.e., of silt brought down for ages past by the Ganges. The process of land formation has roughly been as follows. During the rainy season, the Ganges and its tributaries increase enormously in volume, carrying down vast quantities of silt or mud, with the result that they overflow into the adjacent country. When the water subsides again, the rivers in their retreat leave some of the silt, which they have brought with them, spread over the once flooded land as a thin soil deposit. This process has been repeated during thousands of years, and the land has thus been gradually growing and the surface of the land gradually raised. It is not possible to measure with any degree of accuracy the rate at which the rise of the land has taken place, but a clue has been afforded by the excavations made some years ago at Patna in the hope of bringing to light some remains of Asoka's historic capital. These excavations disclosed remains of buildings of that remote age buried 18 to 20 feet deep beneath fields bearing crops of potatoes, pulse and rice. The rate of this deposit, as indicated by the depth of sediment and the number of centuries which have elapsed, would give a little less than one foot for every hundred years.

In the south-east of the district the Rājgir Hills present an entirely different geological formation. These hills, which are more or less isolated in the alluvial plain, belong probably to the Purāṇa group of metamorphic schists and slates with a layer of massive quartzite. The beds strike E.N.E.—W.S.W., corresponding to the general trend of the hill ranges; they have been much folded by earth movements, and lie at high angles dipping N.N.W. and S.S.E. To the north-west of the main

range the more thinly-bedded rocks are interbedded with several trap-dykes, and still further in that direction, near Ghunsupa, there are a few isolated little knolls of archæan crystalline granitic rock, presenting an intrusive habit among the schists. It is probable that the Purāna group of schists and quartzite is of Bijāwar age.

**BOTANY.** In the alluvial country which forms the greater portion of the Patna district, rice, sugarcane, poppy and a great variety of other crops are extensively grown; and the area under cultivation is bare or dotted over with clumps of bamboos and mango orchards. In the level rice-fields near the Ganges the usual weeds of such localities are found, such as *Ammannia*, *Utricularia*, *Hygrophila* and *Sesbania*. Near the villages in this tract of country there are considerable groves of palmyra (*Borassus flabellifer*) and date palm (*Phoenix sylvestris*), mango orchards, and numerous more isolated examples of *Tamarindus*, *Odina*, *Sapindus* and *Moringa*. Associated with these, one frequently finds in village shrubberies *Glycosmis*, *Clerodendron*, *Solanum*, *Jatropha*, *Trema*, *Streblus* and similar semi-spontaneous and more or less useful species. Further from the river the country is more diversified, and sometimes a dry scrub jungle is met with, of which the principal species are *Glochidion* and other euphorbiaceous shrubs, *Butea* and other leguminous trees, besides various examples of *Ficus*, *Schleichera*, *Wendlandia*, *Gmelina*, *Wrightia*, *Adina*, and *Stephegyne*. The grasses clothing the drier parts are generally of a coarse character, such as *Andropogon contortus*, *aciculatus*, *annulatus*, *foveolatus* and *pertusus*, *Aristida Adscensionis*, *Tragus racemosus* and *Iseilema laxum*. Other species typical of the district are various *Anthistriae* and *Penniseta*, *Eragrostis cynosuroides*, *Saccharum spontaneum*, *Arundinella brasiliensis* and *sabai* grass (*Ischoemum angustifolium*). Throughout this tract the mango (*Mangifera indica*), *pipal* (*Ficus religiosa*) and banyan (*Ficus indica*), are common, the other principal trees being the *bel* (*Ægle Marmelos*), *nim* (*Melia Azadirachta*), *siris* (*Mimosa Sirisau*), *sisu* (*Dalbergia Sissoo*), jack fruit tree (*Artocarpus integrifolia*) and red cotton tree (*Bombax malabaricum*).

**FAUNA.** The carnivora of the district comprise leopard, hyæna, and some smaller animals, such as jackal, fox and wild cat. Wolves were formerly common; and in 1870, 222 deaths from wolfbite were reported, but they have now practically disappeared. The Ungulata are represented by *nilgai* (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*), black buck (*Antelope cervicapra*) and wild pig.

Leopards are common in the southern hills extending south-westwards from Giriak, but confine their depredations to cattle,

sheep, goats, dogs, and sometimes ponies; they are said to be very partial to the two animals last named. The localities mostly infested by them are Rājgir, Chakrā and Bathānī, where they make their kills with practical impunity, the inhabitants treating their depredations as a matter of course. Hyænas are also very common in the same range; for the most part they are content to feed on the offal of the villages, and, when practicable, exhume dead bodies from graves; but they also kill sheep and goats, and, like leopards, are partial to dogs. Bears of the variety known as *Ursus labiatus* are also found in the Rājgir Hills. Wild pigs abound in the same tract as well as in the country at the foot of the hills and on the Son *chars*. In the country adjoining these localities they cause great damage to the crops of the cultivators. In other districts the peasantry endeavour to keep them down by catching them in pits, but even this primitive contrivance is not practised in Patna. On the Son *chars*, where pig-sticking is practicable, the pigs are occasionally ridden down by European sportsmen; but this fails to put any great check on their increasing numbers. *Nilgai* (*Boselaphus tragocamelus*) are also found in large numbers in the same *chars*. They do great injury to the *rabi* crops in the neighbourhood; and sometimes a herd will destroy a large poppy-field in a single night. There is also a small herd of black buck (*Antelope cervicapra*) in the neighbouring *chars* off Maner. They have little chance of multiplying, as they are shot down indiscriminately by local *shikāris*. Hares are numerous in the drier parts; jackals are common throughout the district; and porcupines and foxes are occasionally seen.

The game birds in the hills consist of pea-fowl, jungle fowl, grey partridge, black partridge and bush quail. In the plains grey quail, rain quail, and button quail make their appearance every year, and are shot in large quantities by sportsmen or snared by professional fowlers. Green pigeons are common, and rock pigeons also visit the plains during harvest time. Geese of two kinds, the red and yellow-billed, swarm on the Son and Ganges, and in the large *jhils*, by the middle of November; while great flights of red-headed pochard and white-eyed pochard, pintail and gadwall frequent the same localities. Besides these, the shoveler and Brahmani duck and different varieties of teal and comb-duck make their appearance annually. With these come the white and the black ibis, curlew, whimbrel, jack snipe, smaller snipe of six varieties, locally known as *balārā*, *ghotrā*, *bagedhā*, *surmā*, *sarghai* and *bhurka*, golden plovers and waders. Other cold-weather birds are the cranes known locally

Game  
birds.



as *kurkura* (*Anthropoides virgo*) and *kulung* (*Grus communis*), and various storks, the most noteworthy among them being a gigantic stork called *lohāserang* (*Xenorhynchus Asiaticus*). The *jhils* south of the town of Bihār and near the Rājgir road are also favourite haunts of several kinds of aquatic birds during the cold-weather months.

**Fish.** The Ganges and Son contain a great number of edible fish, such as *buāri*, *tengrā*, *naini*, *bachwa* and *rohu*; *hilsā* (*Culpea ilisha*) are also found in the former and mahseer in the latter river. Fishing practically begins in October with the subsidence of the floods, and the busy season is from November to March, the largest hauls being made in December, January and February. Fish of all kinds and all sizes are caught, but the most valuable belong to the carp family, such as *rohu* and *kollā*; *rohu* up to the weight of 40 lbs. sometimes reward the fishermen's skill. *Hilsā* are caught as far up the river as Patna, as they ascend from the sea, and the hauls, though not so great as lower down the river, are by no means insignificant. Crustaceous fish are common, and prawns (*jhingrā*) are caught in large numbers. Porpoises abound in the Ganges, and tortoises are also numerous. Both the snub-nosed crocodile or mugger and the fish-eating alligator called *gharial* are found in the same river.

**CLIMATE.** Patna enjoys a long cold weather, which commences early in November and comes to an end in the middle of March. The hot weather then sets in and lasts till about the middle of June. Soon after this, the rainy season commences and continues till the end of September; but as the beginning of this season occurs when a storm from the Bay of Bengal passes over Bihār, the commencement of the monsoon may be as early as the last week of May and as late as the first or second week of July.

In the cold weather the climate is delightful. The days are bright and warm, and the sun is not too hot, as soon as it has set, the temperature falls, and the heat of the day gives place to a sharp bracing cold. The lowest temperature known at this season of the year is 36·4° recorded in 1878. In the hot weather the heat is very great, and the temperature has been known to rise as high as 114° (recorded in 1894). The heat is greater than that of Tirhut, though not so intense as in Gayā; but, on the other hand, it is not so dry as in the latter district, and is consequently more relaxing. At this time of the year the heat is aggravated by hot parching winds and clouds of dust. If the wind is from the west, the interior of the houses can be kept fairly cool and pleasant by means of screens (*tattis*) of *khaṭ-khas* grass placed at the windows and

doors and kept constantly wet. The heat is alleviated by the breeze blowing through the screens, but if the west wind subsides or gives place to an east wind, they give no relief. In the rains they are useless, the heat is moist and enervating, and the nights are oppressive.

Owing to its distance from the sea, Patna has greater extremes of climate than the south and east of the Province. Mean temperature varies from  $60^{\circ}$  in January to  $88^{\circ}$  in May, the average maximum temperature rising to  $101^{\circ}$  in April. Owing to the hot and dry westerly winds which prevail in March and April, humidity is much lower at this season than at any other times of the year and averages only 50 per cent. of saturation. With the approach of the monsoon season, the air slowly becomes more charged with moisture, and humidity remains steady at about 86 per cent. throughout July and August. In September, when periods of fine weather alternate with the cloud and rain of the monsoon, humidity is lower; and with breaks of increasing length it gradually falls and reaches a minimum of 76 per cent. in November. There is then a slight increase, partly owing to the unsettled weather caused by the cold-season disturbances.

From October until May the prevailing direction of wind is from the west, but a marked change takes place with the commencement of the monsoon, which is generally caused by the first cyclonic storm which enters from the Bay of Bengal. The flow of the moist winds from the Bay is northwards over the eastern districts of Bengal proper, but afterwards they trend to the west, owing to the barrier interposed by the Himalayan range; so that after the passage of the cyclonic storms, easterly winds set in and continue with but little interruption until the middle of September, when westerly winds again become common.

From November to April fine dry weather prevails with an almost entire absence of cloud and rainfall, and only a fraction of an inch of rain falls monthly; there is usually some rain at Christmas time. In May about 2 inches of rain fall on the average, and in normal years the monsoon breaks in June. As already stated, however, the commencement of the monsoon varies greatly. In 1887 heavy rain began on the 27th May and the total fall in that month was 9.6 inches. On the other hand, in 1885, 1888, 1898 and 1902 the fall in June was only about 3 inches, owing to the tendency of storms to recurve eastward in Bengal. The heaviest rainfall occurs in July and August, varying from 12.4 inches in the former to 11.2 inches in the latter month. From the middle of September the monsoon current begins to fall off in strength; and if the

westerly winds are stronger than usual, the storms coming inland from the Bay of Bengal recede eastwards, and rainfall is consequently deficient.

The annual rainfall appears to have increased within the last half century. The average fall at Patna during the 25 years ending in 1883 was 41·8 inches, and in the 26 years ending in 1900 it was 47 inches. It varies greatly from year to year and from place to place, the average for the district being only 24·2 inches in 1903 and 48·3 inches in 1905, while 60 inches fell at Bārh in the latter year and only 32·8 inches at Bikhram. For the whole district the average annual rainfall is 45·3 inches, of which 7·7 inches fall in June, 12·4 in July, 11·2 in August, and 7·2 inches in September. The rainfall in the latter month is a matter of incalculable importance to the cultivators, as on it depends a successful harvest of the rice crop, but unfortunately it occasionally fails for the reasons stated above. Thus in 1876 less than 1 inch fell in September, in 1882 only 1·3 inches, and not infrequently the fall is less than 3·5 inches, which is about half the normal fall. As an instance of excessive rain, may be mentioned an extraordinary downpour which occurred in June 1897, when 20 inches fell in 3 days at Bankipore and 26 inches at Dinapore. The apparent cause was a rapid rise of pressure in the north-west of India, followed by a sudden check to the westward flow of the monsoon current over Bihār with much ascensional motion.

Statistics of the rainfall at the various recording stations are given below for the cold weather (November to February), the hot weather (March to May), and the rainy season (June to October), the figures shown being the averages recorded in each case.

STATION.	Years recorded.	November to February.	March to May.	June to October.	Annual average.
BĀRH ...	30-31	1·50	2·44	38·92	42·86
BĪHAR ...	30-31	1·75	2·53	40·40	44·68
BĪKRAM ...	14-15	1·87	2·38	43·08	47·33
DINĀPORE ...	31	1·50	2·11	42·41	46·02
HĪLSA ...	14-15	1·91	2·55	41·67	46·13
PATNA ...	48-49	1·59	2·35	40·60	44·54
Average ...	...	1·69	2·39	41·18	45·26

## CHAPTER II.

## HISTORY.

No district in Bengal has such an ancient and eventful history as Patna. This history stretches back for 2,500 years and centres round Rājgir, Patna and Bihār, which have all been at different times famous capitals. The remote past of Rājgir is enveloped in the mists of legend, but with the dawn of history we find it the royal residence of the Saisunāga kings. Under their rule Rājgir was frequently visited by Buddha, and during the same period his great contemporary, Mahāvira Vardhamāna, founded the rival religion of the Jains. Rājgir was the scene of some of Buddha's earliest preaching and of the first great Buddhist Council; and to this day Jains from all parts of India visit its sacred hills, and also the shrines at Pāwapuri, where their great hierarch died. In the fifth century B. C. Pātaliputra was founded and soon superseded Rājgir as the capital of Magadha, a kingdom which under Chandra Gupta became the nucleus of an empire stretching from sea to sea. This city, now buried beneath its modern successor, Patna, was as early as the third century B. C. the metropolis of India; and in the fourth century A. D. it witnessed the birth of another empire—that of the Guptas. With the fall of the Gupta empire the prosperity of Pātaliputra seems to have declined, and after the seventh century A. D. it practically disappeared.

Bihār now took its place under the Pala kings (800—1200) as the capital of Magadha and the centre of Buddhist learning; its name still recalls its ancient glory as the great *Vihār*, or monastery of the Buddhists. This position it retained till the Muhammadan conquest swept away both Buddhist monasteries and priests; but even after their extinction it continued to be the seat of government till the establishment of Patna in the 13th century by Sher Shāh. Thenceforward the district entered on a troubled period of war and convulsion, in the midst of which the Dutch and English merchants endeavoured to carry on the peaceful pursuits of commerce. This period only ended with the final supremacy of the British, which was ushered in by the Patna massacre—a tragedy surpassing in horror that of the Black



Hole of Calcutta in that it claimed more victims, was deliberately planned, and was as deliberately carried out in cold blood by a European. Since the accession of the British to power, the tranquillity of the district has been broken only by the Mutiny of 1857, when the troops at Dinapore broke out in open revolt and the interior was overrun by marauding bands proclaiming that the British Raj was at an end.

From the foregoing sketch it will be apparent that it would be beyond the scope of the present work to give a detailed account of the history of this district, the capital of which is built on the site of the metropolis of an Indian empire established more than 20 centuries ago, which saw the birth of Jainism and the growth and splendid development of the Buddhist faith, which has been the battle-field of nations, and which witnessed the hard-won victories of the British and the excesses of the Mutiny. All that can be attempted here is to give a sketch of the most salient features of its history.

THE  
PREHIS-  
TORIC  
PERIOD.

In prehistoric times Patna formed part of Magadha, a country which roughly corresponded with the tract, now known as South Bihâr, which is comprised within this district and the adjoining district of Gaya. By the Aryans it was regarded as a land peopled by wild tribes hardly worthy of the name of men; and as late as the sixth century B. C. it is mentioned by Baudhâyana as a tract inhabited by people of mixed origin outside the pale of Aryan civilization. From the early references to Magadha in Epic literature we may conclude that it was still in the possession of aboriginal races, who gave place to Aryan immigrants at a later period than in the country north of the Ganges, and that it continued to be the home of these tribes at a time when Tirhut and Oudh were filled with Aryan settlements. With Chedi or Bandelkhand it was under the sway of a king named Jarāsandha, who is a prominent figure in the great conflict between the two branches of Aryan stock recorded in the Mahābhārata.\* The date of this monarch is too remote to be fixed with any certainty; but his name still lives in local legend, and it is known that his capital was at Rājgīr (Rājagriha), where the remains of his stronghold may still be seen in the great stone walls and causeways which skirt and climb the rocky hills.

EARLY  
HISTORY.

After Jarāsandha a dynasty of 28 kings is said to have ruled in Magadha, but nothing is known of these kings but their names. The first event which can claim historic reality is the rise of the Saisunāga dynasty under Sisunāga (cir. 600 B. C.). The fifth

\* Hearn and Stair, *History of India* (1903).

monarch of the line, Bimbisāra, was the first to extend the frontiers of Magadha by the annexation of Anga, a small kingdom corresponding with the present districts of Bhāgalpur and Monghyr; and in this district he signalized his rule by building the town of Rājagriha (Old Rājgīr) at the base of the hill crowned by the ancient fort of Jarāśadha.

The chief interest, however, attaching to his rule is that it witnessed the foundation both of Buddhism and Jainism. Gautama Buddha came to this district at an early stage in his search after truth, and Rājgīr was the first place at which he settled after leaving his father's territory. Here he attached himself as a disciple to two Brāhmins, Alāra and Uddaka, but failing to find enlightenment in the ecstatic meditation affected by these teachers of Brahmanical philosophy, he wandered forth in the direction of Bodh Gayā. After the attainment of Buddhahood or supreme enlightenment, he returned to the court of Bimbisāra at Rājgīr, and then made his way to the deer park at Benāres. Thenceforward Rājgīr became a favourite resort of Buddha, and he frequently returned there, his two chief places of retreat being the Bamboo Grove and the hill called the Vulture Peak. Here for many years he preached and taught, the king himself becoming one of his disciples; here he soon succeeded in gathering a large following; and here after his death the Buddhist brotherhood assembled in the famous Sattapanni Cave and held the first Buddhist Council (*cir.* 487 B. C.).

The great contemporary of Buddha, Vardhamāna Mahāvīra, the founder of Jainism, was engaged in his ministry at the same time and in the same tract of country. Dissatisfied with the rule of the order of Pārśvanātha, which did not conform with his ideal of stringency—one of its cardinal points was absolute nudity—he left the monastery at Vaisālī (Basārī), and for 42 years spent a wandering life in North and South Bihār. During this period he succeeded in gathering a large following, and about the year 490 B. C. died at Pāwāpurī, a village in the Bihār subdivision. After his death, the monks of his order, who were known as the Nigranthas or men who discarded all social ties, eventually spread over the whole of India and became known as the Jainas, a name derived from the title of Jina or spiritual conqueror, which Mahāvīra claimed, just as Gautama claimed to be Buddha or the enlightened one.

Bimbisāra was succeeded (*cir.* 490 B. C.) by his son and murderer, Ajātasatru, who made a new capital at Rājgīr to the north of the old city and next erected a fortress at the village of Pātālī on the southern bank of the Ganges in order to hold in

Rise of  
Buddhism.

Rise of  
Jainism.

FOUNDA-  
TION OF  
PĀTALI-  
PUTRA.

cheek the powerful Lichchhavi clan to the north of that river. According to the Buddhist scriptures, this fortified village was visited, a few months before his death, by Buddha, who prophesied its future greatness in the words—"Of all famous places, busy marts and centres of commerce, Pataliputra will be the greatest; but three dangers will threaten it—fire, water and internal strife." The prophecy of greatness was fulfilled, for about half a century afterwards the grandson of Ajatasatru Udaya (434 B. C.) laid the foundations of the city, which under the names of Kusumapura, Pushpapura and Pataliputra, became the centre of the imperial power of Magadha, and eventually of all India.

This transference of the capital from the hilly fastness of Rajgir to the centre of the Gangetic plain appears to have been dictated by reasons of policy. Magadha had now become a great kingdom, the suzerainty of which was acknowledged as far north as the Himālayas, and a central site was therefore necessary for the capital. Such a site was found, under the shadow of Ajatasatru's fort, in Pataliputra, which stood at a point of great commercial and strategical importance, being situated near the confluence of the great rivers of Mid-India.

Maurya  
dynasty.

The Saisunāga dynasty was extinguished about 400 B. C., and Magadha passed under the rule of the Nanda kings, who in their turn were overpome by Chandra Gupta, the founder of the Mauryan empire. Himself a native of Magadha, he headed a national revolt against the Greek domination which Alexander had established in the north of India and destroyed most of the Macedonian garrisons. He then turned against the Nandas, and in 321 B. C. captured Pataliputra. Undisputed master of Magadha and commander of a force of 600,000 infantry, 30,000 cavalry, 9,000 elephants and a multitude of chariots, he proceeded to reduce to vassalage the greater part of India, until his dominions extended from the Bay of Bengal to the Arabian Sea. With an ease equal to that attending his conquest, he succeeded in repelling the invasion of Seleukos Nikator, king of Syria and lord of Western and Central Asia, who was obliged to retire, after ceding the outlying province of Afghanistan and giving his daughter in marriage to the victorious Emperor.

Megasthenes'  
account.

Soon after the conclusion of peace in 303 B. C. Seleukos sent Megasthenes as his envoy to the court of Chandra Gupta, and from his pen we have the first reliable account of Pataliputra, the capital of India. The city stood on the tongue of land formed by the confluence of the Ganges and Son on the northern bank of the latter river, which then ran parallel to and at a short distance

from the Ganges. Like the modern city, under which it now lies buried, it was a long narrow parallelogram, 9 to 10 miles long and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 miles broad. It was defended by a massive wooden palisade pierced by 64 gates, crowned by 570 towers, and protected by a broad deep moat, filled from the water of the Son, which also served as the city sewer. The extent of the city was enormous, and an idea of its vast size may be gathered from a comparison with the area of London. Ten miles, along the river, is the same as from the Tower of London to Hammersmith Bridge; or, if taken in a straight line, from Greenwich to Richmond; and from the Chelsea Embankment to the Marble Arch is just two miles, south to north. All of London from the Tower to the Houses of Parliament, and from the river to the Hampstead hills would occupy about the same space.\*

This great city contained a vast population, estimated at 400,000, and the retinue of the king alone numbered many thousands. "The royal palace, though chiefly built of timber, was considered to excel in splendour and magnificence the palaces of Susa and Ecbatana, its gilded pillars being adorned with golden vines and silver birds. The buildings stood in an extensive park, studded with fish-ponds and furnished with a great variety of ornamental trees and shrubs. Here the imperial court was maintained with barbaric and luxurious ostentation. Basins and goblets of gold, some measuring six feet in width, richly carved tables and chairs of state, vessels of Indian copper set with precious stones, and gorgeous embroidered robes were to be seen in profusion, and contributed to the brilliancy of the public ceremonies."†

The administration of this great and splendid city was controlled by a commission of 30 members divided into 6 boards with 5 members each. •The first board was charged with the superintendence of the industrial arts and artisans; the rates of wages were probably fixed by it, and any one who impaired the efficiency of a craftsman was punished by the loss of a hand or eye. The second was entrusted with the duty of superintending foreigners and attending to their wants. The third board was responsible for the registration of births and deaths, which was enforced both for the information of the Government and for purposes of taxation. The fourth board was the Board of Trade, which exercised a general superintendence over trade and commerce, regulated weights and measures, and probably published official price-lists. The fifth board was concerned with manufactures, the sale of

Municipal  
adminis-  
tration.

\* Rlys Davids, *Buddhist India* (1903), p. 263.

† V. A. Smith, *Early History of India* (1904), p. 115.



which was subjected to regulations similar to those governing the sales of imported goods. The sixth board was charged with the duty of levying a tithe on the prices of all articles sold, and evasion of this tax was punishable by death. In addition to these departmental duties, the municipal commissioners in their collective capacity controlled all the affairs of the city, including the markets, temples, quays and public works.

Influx of  
foreigners.

The most interesting perhaps of all these municipal boards is that charged with the supervision of foreign residents and visitors, which performed duties similar to those entrusted to the consuls of foreign powers. All foreigners were closely watched by officials, who provided them with suitable lodgings and, in case of need, with medical attendance. Deceased strangers were decently buried, and their estates administered by the board, which remitted the assets to the persons entitled to receive them. The existence of these elaborate regulations is conclusive proof that in the third century B. C. there was constant intercourse between Patna and foreign countries. Besides this, there must have been a considerable Greek community resident in the city; for the Greek princess, the daughter of Seleukos and wife of Chandra Gupta, had a suite of her countrymen, the Greek ambassador Megasthenes presumably had another, and there must also have been a number of Greek artists and artisans employed about the court. There is, however, no trace of Greek influence in the organization of the empire, and the model on which the institutions of Chandra Gupta were based appears to have been the stately fabric of the Persian monarchy.

Spread of  
Jainism.

In his account of the splendour of Chandra Gupta's empire and its highly-developed organization, Megasthenes makes no mention of the rise of Buddhism or Jainism. But at this period Jainism was beginning to spread over India. We learn from other sources that in the second century after Mahāvira's death (about 310 B. C.), during the reign of Chandra Gupta, a very severe famine, lasting 12 years, took place in Magadha, beyond which as yet the Jain order does not seem to have spread. Under the pressure of the famine, Bhadrabahu, who was the head of the still undivided Jain community, emigrated with a portion of his people into the Karnāta or Canarese country in the south of India, and Sthūlabhadra assumed the headship over the other portion that remained in Magadha. Towards the end of the famine, during the absence of Bhadrabahu, a great council assembled at Pātaliputra; and collected the Jain sacred books,

consisting of the eleven Angas and the fourteen Pūrvas, the latter of which are collectively called the twelfth Anga.\*

The full development of Buddhism occurred shortly afterwards under the imperial patronage of Asoka (272-231 B. C.), who himself joined the Buddhist monkhood and assumed the yellow robe. The Emperor signalized his adherence to the faith of Buddha by the construction of magnificent monasteries and temples; Magadha became the centre of the missionary propaganda which he initiated; and at his command the third Buddhist Council was held at Pātaliputra in order to settle the canon of scripture and reform abuses in monastic discipline. Spread of Buddhism.

In Patna, Asoka's reign was one of great architectural activity, Asoka. which might almost give him a claim to the saying that he found it a city of wood and left it one of stone. As a further protection against attacks, he built an outer masonry wall round it, established a hospital for animals, and beautified the city with innumerable stone buildings so richly decorated that in after ages they were regarded as the work not of men but of genii in the service of the Emperor. When Fa Hian visited the city in the fifth century A. D., he wrote in amazed wonder of the buildings still standing—"The royal palace and halls in the midst of the city which exist now as of old, were all made by spirits which he employed, and which piled up the stones, reared the walls and gates, and executed the elegant carving and inlaid sculpture-work, in a way which no human hands of this world could accomplish."

Shortly after the death of Asoka, which is said to have taken place at a holy hill near Rājgir, the Mauryan dynasty was overthrown and the empire began to decline. Gupta empire. Outlying provinces asserted their independence, and Khāravela, king of Kalinga, claims to have led his army as far as Pātaliputra and there compelled the Sunga Emperor to sue for peace (157 B. C.). That city continued to be the capital of the diminished kingdom of Magadha, but does not again come into prominence until the rise of the Gupta empire in the fourth century A.D. The first of the line, Chandra Gupta I, revived the ancient glories of Magadha by extending the kingdom as far as Allahābād; but Pātaliputra ceased to be the royal residence after the completion of the conquests effected by his son Samudra Gupta (326—375), which necessitated the selection of a more central position for the metropolis. It still remained, however, the great

\* A. F. Rudolf Hearn, PH. D., C.I.E., *Jainism and Buddhism*, Calcutta Review, 1396.

eastern city of the empire, and we have a picture of its prosperity and of the flourishing condition of Magadha from the pen of Fa Hian (405—411). The palace of Asoka was still standing, and, as we have seen, deeply impressed the simple pilgrim, who believed it to be the work of spirits. Near a great stūpa, also ascribed to Asoka, stood two great monasteries containing 400 or 700 monks, which were so famous for learning that they were frequented by scholars from all parts; here he spent three years studying Sanskrit and copying rare scriptures for which he had vainly searched in other parts of India. The country round was worthy of its capital. The towns of Magadha were the largest in Mid-India, the people were rich and prosperous, they emulated each other in the practice of virtue, and justice flourished. Rest-houses were provided for travellers on all the highways and charitable institutions were numerous. "The nobles and householders of this country," he says, "have founded hospitals within the city, to which the poor of all countries, the destitute, the cripples and the diseased may repair. They receive help of all kinds gratuitously; physicians treat them, and order them food and drink, medicine or decoctions—everything, in fact, that may contribute to their ease."\*

Fall of  
Patali-  
putra.

This is the last account of the splendours of Pataliputra. Hiuen Tsiang, another Chinese pilgrim who visited India between 630 and 645, found its glory had departed. "It is," he says, "an old city but long deserted; now there only remain the old foundation walls. The monasteries, Hindu temples and Buddhist stūpas, which lie in ruins, may be counted by hundreds, and only two or three remain entire." All that was left of the ancient city was a small town, containing about 1,000 houses, to the north of the old palace and bordering on the Ganges. This devastation was probably due to the invasion of the savage Huns in the latter half of the sixth century, and later to the inroad of Sasānka, king of Central Bengal, a fanatical enemy of Buddhism, who sacked the city, broke its sacred relic, a stone marked with the footprints of Buddha, destroyed the convents and scattered the monks, and carried his ravages to the foot of the Nepāl hills. The persecution of Buddhism by Sasānka was followed by the royal patronage of Harsha Vardhana, also called Silāditya, who ruled northern India between 600 and 648. The account of Hiuen Tsiang shows that, though Pataliputra was in ruins, Magadha was the peaceful home of Buddhism, full of great shrines and splendid monasteries, chief among which was that of Nālanda (at the modern village of Bārgaen), which

\* Beal's *Buddhist Records of the Western World*.

sheltered thousands of Buddhist monks. The towns, he said, were thickly populated; the soil was rich, fertile, and extensively cultivated. The people were simple, honest folk, who highly esteemed learning and profoundly respected the religion of Buddha; but there were several Hindu temples "occupied by sectaries of various persuasions, who are very numerous."

On the death of Harshā in 648, the throne was usurped by Arjuna, one of whose first acts was to attack a mission sent by the Emperor of China, kill the escort, and plunder its property. The king of Tibet sent an avenging force through Nepāl, where it was joined by 7,000 Nepalese. It then swept down on the plains of Magadhā, and in a battle fought on the Ganges completely defeated the Indians. The royal family was captured with 12,000 prisoners, 580 walled cities made their submission, and Arjuna was taken in chains to Lhāsa.\*

After this, the central power declined, and each small potentate carved out an independent kingdom. Early in the ninth century (cir. 815) a chieftain named Gopāla became ruler of Bengal, and extended his power over Magadhā. Here he made his capital at Bihār, which had taken the place of Pātaliputra, and built the great Buddhist monastery of Otantapuri or Udandapura in the town. His successors were also devout Buddhists, and most of the Buddhist remains extant in the district date back to this period (800—1200). Under their rule Magadhā became a great centre of missionary enterprise, sending out emissaries to teach the faith all over India and even outside its borders. Not the least notable result of this propaganda was the revival of Buddhism in Tibet, where the corrupt Lāmaism prevalent was reformed in the 11th century by Atisha, the hierarch of Magadhā and abbot of the monastery of Vikramāsila (the modern village of Silāo).

The Buddhism of Magadhā was finally swept away by the Muhammadan invasion under Bakhtiyār Khilji. In 1193 the capital, Bihār, was seized by a small party of 200 horsemen, who rushed the postern gate, and sacked the town. The slaughter of the "shaven-headed Brāhmans," as the Muhammadan chronicler calls the Buddhist monks, was so complete that when the victor searched for some one capable of explaining the contents of the monastic libraries, not a living man could be found who was able to do so. "It was discovered," it was said, "that the whole

\* V. A. Smith, *Early History of India* (1904), pp. 298-99; Sarat Chandra Das, *The Ancient Kingdoms of Nepāl, Puru and Magadhā* (from the *Annals of the Thang Dynasty of China*), Indian World January 1907.

fort and city was a place of study."\* A similar fate befell the other Buddhist institutions, against which the combined intolerance and rapacity of the Muhammadans were directed. The monasteries were sacked and the monks slain, many of the temples were ruthlessly destroyed or desecrated, and countless idols were broken and trodden under foot. Those monks who escaped the sword fled to Tibet, Nepal and Southern India; and Buddhism as a popular religion in Bihar, its last abode in Northern India, was finally destroyed. Thenceforward Patna passed under the Muhammadan rule.†

For some centuries after this, we have no separate mention of the history of the district. With the rest of South Bihar it was included in the Bengal viceroyalty under Bakhtiyar Khilji and his immediate successors, and except for a short interval when it had a separate government, it continued to be ruled by the Bengal Viceroys till 1320, when the Emperor Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlak again separated it. In 1397 A.D. it was attached to the kingdom of Jaunpur, and a century later it became subject to the Muhammadan kings of Gaur.

Founda-  
tion of  
Patna.

In the 16th century it again emerged from its obscurity in the time of the Emperor Babar, who in 1529 advanced as far as Maner in order to reduce the rebellious Afghan chiefs. His death in the succeeding year served as a signal to rouse the Afghans once more to assert their independence, and the struggle which ensued ended in the conquest of Northern India by Sher Shah. To his foresight must be ascribed the foundation of the city of Patna, of which the following account is given in the *Tarikh-i-Da'udi*—"Sher Shah, on his return from Bengal, in 1541, came to Patna, then a small town dependent on Bihar, which was the seat of the local government. He was standing on the bank of the Ganges, when, after much reflection, he said to those who were standing by—"If a fort were to be built in this place, the waters of the Ganges could never flow far from it, and Patna would become one of the great towns of this country." He ordered skilful carpenters and bricklayers to make immediately an estimate for building a fort at the place where he stood. These experienced workmen submitted an estimate of 5 lakhs, which on the spur of the moment was made over to trustworthy persons. The fort was completed, and was considered to be exceedingly strong. Bihar from that time was deserted, and fell

\* *Tabakat-i-Nasiri*, Elliot's *History of India*, Vol. II.

† This account of the early history of Patna has been mainly compiled from *The Early History of India*, by V. A. Smith.



to ruin; while Patna became one of the largest cities of the province.\*

The city under the protection of this fort soon became a centre of commerce, and the rapidity of its development is apparent from the account of Ralph Fitch (1586), who says:—"Patenaw is a very long and a great towne. The houses are simple, made of earth and covered with strawe; the streetes are very large. In this towne there is a trade of cotton, and cloth of cotton, much sugar, which they carry from hence to Bengala and India, very much opium and other commodities."† In 1620 we find Portuguese merchants at Patna; and Tavernier's account shows that a little more than a century after its foundation it was the great entrepôt of Northern India, "the largest town in Bengal and the most famous for trade." Here he met Armenian merchants from Dantzic and traders from Tippera. Musk was brought in from Bhutan, as he called Tibet, and he himself purchased Rs. 26,000 worth of that commodity; caravans went to Tibet every year and Tibetans came to Patna for the coral, amber and tortoise-shell bracelets for which it was famous.

The city was also a place of great strategical importance, and when Dāūd Khān was raised to the throne of Bengal by the Afghāns in 1573, he made Patna and the adjoining fortress of Hājipur his headquarters. Here he successfully held out against the siege of the Mughal army under Munim Khān, and in 1574 the Emperor Akbar was forced to come in person and superintend the operations. Hājipur was taken by storm, and then, according to the *Tabakāt-i-Akbarī*, "the Emperor went out upon an elephant to reconnoitre the fort and the environs of the city, and ascended the Pānj-pahāri, which is opposite the fort. This Pānj-pahāri, or 'five domes,' is a collection of old domes (*gumbaz*), which the infidels built in old times with hard bricks placed in layers. The Afghāns, who were on the walls and bastions of the fortress, saw the Emperor and his suite as he was making his survey, and in their despair and recklessness fired some guns at the Pānj-pahāri, but they did no injury to any one."

This was the last effort of the Afghāns, for Dāūd Khān, learning of the loss of Hājipur by the sight of the heads of those slain in the fight, made his escape by night down the Ganges.

\* Elliot, *History of India*, Vol. IV.

† J. H. Ryley, *Ralph Fitch*, 1899. Fitch quaintly adds—"Here in Patenau I saw a dissembling prophet which sate upon an horse in the market place, and made as though he slept, and many of the people came and touched his feet with their hands, and then kissed their hands. They tooke him for a great man, but sure he was a lasie lubber. I left him there sleeping. The people of these countries be much given to such prating and dissembling hypocrities."

Dāūd  
Khān's  
rebellion.

The garrison of 20,000 men, left without a leader, fled in all directions, and the roads were so crowded with horses, carriages and elephants that great numbers were trampled to death. To complete their misfortunes, the bridge over the Pūnpūn gave way; the fugitives were either drowned in the river or cut down by the swords of the Mughal cavalry, and the pursuit was not given up till they reached Dariyāpur, 2 miles south of Mokāmsh and nearly 50 miles from Patna. The fall of Patna, adds the Muhammadan historian, was indeed the conquest of Bengal; and after this, the city became the headquarters of the Mughal Governors, who ruled over the whole of Bibār.

MUHAM-  
MADAN  
GOVERN-  
ORS.

Under the Muhammadan Governors, Patna once more became a centre of political life. During this period\* the city witnessed the proclamation of two Mughal Emperors; it had, more than once, for its *Sūbahdār* or Governor a prince of the royal blood; whole armies encamped at Mithāpur on the east and at Bāgh Jafar Khān on the west, the latter being on several occasions the scene of desperate battles; and towards the close of their rule it was sacked by a desperate band of Afghāns. In 1612 it was stormed by the pretender, Khusru, who gave up the city to plunder, and had himself proclaimed Emperor in the Governor's palace; 10 years later it was seized by Shān Jahān, who held his court there for a short time during his rebellion against his father; and in 1626 prince Parwez Shāh, another son of Jahāngir, commemorated his rule by building the mosque now known as the Pathar Masjid or stone mosque. In 1664 Shaista Khān, an uncle of Aurangzeb and, like him, a bigoted zealot, initiated his tenure of office by collecting a *jazia* or poll-tax from the Hindus; and when he was recalled, Aurangzeb appointed his third son, Muhammad Azīm, in his stead.

With the viceroyalty of Aurangzeb's grandson, Azīm-us-Shān, Patna attained the zenith of its splendour. This prince made his court at Patna in preference to Murshidābād, improved the fortifications, and in 1704 named the city after himself Azīmābād. Many of the nobles of Delhi came to live within its walls, and separate quarters were assigned for the retinue which gathered round the court. The noblemen had their residence in Mahala Kaiwān Shekoh 'the splendid palace,' now corrupted into Khawā Koh; *Dīwān Mahala* was so named, because it was assigned to the clerks of the Government offices; *Mughalpāra* contained the quarters of the Mughals, and *Lodikatāra* those of the Afghān Lodis. The poor and destitute were not forgotten, and

\* For a fuller account of this period, see *Patna during the last days of the Muhammadans*, Calcutta Review, Vol. LXXVI, 1882.

alms-houses and *sarais* were built for their reception. It is said that the young prince aspired to make the city a second Delhi, but this ambition was cut short by the fratricidal war which broke out on the death of Aurangzeb, in the course of which he met his death (1712) by being swallowed up alive in a quicksand.

At this time the Governor of Patna was Husain Ali Khān, one of the two Saiyids of Barah, who played such a prominent part as king-makers in the 18th century. After the death of Azīm-us-Shān, his son Farrukhsiyar made his way to Patna, where the Governor espoused his cause. Farrukhsiyar was welcomed with acclamation by the people, brought in great state within the fort, and there proclaimed Emperor. He then set forth to Delhi, and on his establishing his throne there, many of the nobles of Azīm-us-Shān's court returned to the capital. The city lost still more of these nobles soon afterwards, when the Saiyids set up Muhammad Shāh (1719) as Emperor and sent Fakhr-ud-daula to Bihār; for this Governor treated the noblemen left there with great indignity, attached their *jāgirs*, and drove them out of the city. They claimed redress at the court at Delhi, and after the fall of the Saiyids succeeded in their appeal. Orders were sent dismissing Fakhr-ud-daula and annexing the *Sābah* of Bihār to Bengal. Bihār thus passed under the rule of the Viceroy of Bengal, and thereafter remained an appanage of that province.

In the meantime, the commerce of Patna had attracted the European merchant companies. The first English commercial mission set forth from Agra in 1620, two Englishmen, Hughes and Parker, being sent from Agra to Patna to purchase cloth and establish a house of business; but the great expense of land carriage, first to Agra and then to Surat, so enhanced the price of the articles that next year the trade was abandoned. A second attempt was made from Surat through Agra to establish English trade at Patna in 1632, when one Peter Mundy left Agra for Patna with "8 carts laden with barrels of quicksilver and parcels of vermilion for the Honourable Company's account to be there sold, and the money to be there invested, as also to see the state of the country what hopes of benefit by trading into these parts." After staying a month at Patna, Mundy reported against the enterprise, as it was his opinion that "the sending of me to Pattana with the Company's goods may not only prove to their loss, but is also against the intent and meaning of the President and Council at Surat." When, however, the English established themselves on the seaboard of Bengal, it was possible for them to explore the great trade of Patna with some profit; and in 1650 we find instructions given to some English pioneers sent from

European  
settle-  
ments.



Balasore to Hooghly, that "Patenna being on all sides concluded the best place for procuring peter, they are to make a trial how they can procure the same from thence." Shortly after this, the English must have made a small settlement at Patna, for in 1657 it is mentioned as a factory under the control of the head agency at Hooghly.

This first settlement was humble enough, the English merchants living and hiring houses in Patna, while their factory was built on the other side of the Ganges at Singiā, both because it was nearer the saltpetre grounds, and because it was removed from the interference of the Governor and the exactions of his subordinates. The chief article of commerce was saltpetre, which was in great demand in Europe for the manufacture of gunpowder; but the English were not blind to the value of other trade, and a report submitted in 1661 shows how great this was. Musk was brought in from Bhutan and sent to Agra for export to Persia and Venice; drugs came from China; opium, even then the great local product,\* was sold in great quantities; lac changed hands, but was very dear; the taffeties made there were better than those of Cosimbazar; and English cloth, sold by the plush yard, had made its way into the market. Under the vigorous superintendence of Job Charnock, who was chief of the factory from 1664 to 1680, the English trade developed, and fleets of Patna boats laden with saltpetre were a common sight along the Ganges. The Court of Directors were never weary of asking for saltpetre from Patna, where it could be had so good and cheap that the contract for it was discontinued on the west coast in 1668 and at Masulipatam in 1670.

The English, however, were not the only merchants in the field, for the Dutch had made a settlement there before this. In the instructions given in 1650 we find that secret enquiry was to be made how, when, and where they procured sugar; the quantity they last procured at Patna had, it was said, been well approved of, and the English were to procure some from thence by the same way or instruments they might use to procure saltpetre. Tavernier, who visited Patna with Bernier in 1666, and found it already "one of the greatest cities of India," says—"The Holland Company have a house there, by reason of their trade in saltpetre, which they refine at a great town called Choupar (Chaprā). Coming to Patna, we met the Hollanders in the street

\* Captain Alexander Hamilton writes in 1727—"Patana is the next town frequented by Europeans, where the English and Dutch have factories for saltpetre and raw silk. It produces also so much opium that it serves all the countries in India with that commodity."

returning from Choupar, who stopped our coaches to salute us. We did not part till we had emptied two bottles of Shiras wine in the open street, which is not taken notice of in that country where people meet with an entire freedom without any ceremony."

In 1680 Charnock left Patna for Cossimbazar, and the English soon became embroiled with the native authorities. Next year Shaista Khān, the Viceroy of Bengal, forbade the purchase of any saltpetre, threw Peacock, the new factor, into prison, and imposed a  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. duty on all the Company's goods. For 30 years after this we have a record of the constant difficulties which the English had to meet. In 1686 Shaista Khān sent orders to Patna to seize all the Company's property and imprison their servants; and again in 1702 all the English settled there were seized, their goods confiscated, and themselves confined for 51 days in the common jail.

The exactions of the Viceroy nearly put an end to the trade at Patna, and for several years we find orders given by the Company now to abandon their settlement and again to retain it. In July 1704, English trade at Patna is stopped owing to the necessity of paying customs, and the Company send to recall their agent; next month they resolve after all to continue the settlement. In 1706 the Council at Calcutta seem anxious to keep the factory going, and two of its members are sent to the Patna residency with money and presents; in 1707 the Council, hearing of Aurangzeb's death and alarmed at the news that it was intended to levy contributions from all merchants, send orders to their agents to leave Patna at once with all the saltpetre they can collect. In 1709 it was again agreed after much consultation to continue the Patna factory "now the government is more settled;" but this calm did not last long. In 1712, after Farrukhsiyar advanced his claims to the throne, it was resolved to lay the city of Patna under contribution; a list of rich men was drawn up, at the head of which stood the English, and the goods of the Dutch Chief, Van Hoorn, were confiscated. A watch was set over the factory, and the English withdrew to Singiā, but did not escape scot-free, as they were compelled to pay Rs. 22,000 to the Prince and Rs. 6,500 as presents to the Governor, the Barhah Saiyid, Husain Ali. They were luckier, however, than the Dutch, who were forced to hand over 2 lakhs and now lost their property in Bihār. Next year it was again decided to abandon the factory, and this was done in 1715; but experience soon showed that without a proper staff it was impossible to obtain the supplies of saltpetre and piece-goods which the Company required from Patna, and in 1718 the factory was re-established.\*

\* C. R. Wilson, *Early Annals of the English in Bengal.*

Marāthā  
and  
Afghān  
raids.

Patna now entered upon the last half century of Muham-madan rule. In 1740 Ali Vardi Khān encamped his army in the city and induced his officers to swear to follow him to the death; the Muhammadan officers swearing by the Korān, and the Hindu officers by Ganges water and the sacred *tulsi* plant, he then marched against the Nawab Sarfaraz Khān, and with his defeat became undisputed ruler of Bengal and Bibār. Soon after this, the Marāthā inroads began, and Patna was in a constant state of alarm. In 1741 the Governor, in order to protect Patna against them, began to improve the fortifications and repair the city wall. "There was already such a wall," says the author of the *Sair-ul-Mutākharrin*, "but so neglected and decayed, and, withal, so beset by houses, that it could hardly be distinguished from them. He therefore ordered that a deep ditch should be sunk round, and that the earth dug from it should be thrown behind and upon the old wall, so as both to raise and strengthen the same. But as this was not to be done without ruining the houses already built on the side of the old wall or close to it, it did not fail to occasion much murmuring and much discontent among the owners. But the utility of the undertaking was so apparent, that no regard could be paid to their complaints; and in a little time the wall, rising gradually from the ground, afforded an insurance of future safety. In process of time, whenever the country came to be overrun by Marāthās (and it has been so several times), not only vast numbers of people used to retire within the walls, and to find their safety there; but even the numerous houses and habitations which remained without, were effectually protected from plunder by the cannon of the rampart. This work being at last finished, the Governor commenced to live easy in his palace."

His ease of mind and the strength of his fortifications were soon tried by the attack of Mustafa Khān, the rebellious Afghān general of Ali Vardi Khān, who in 1745 laid siege to the city. The Governor raised a levy of 14,000 horse and the same number of foot, but it was felt that they could never stand against the Afghān veterans in the open. "A vast number, therefore, of pioneers and labourers was sent for from all parts of the province, and an entrenchment was soon thrown up, that encompassed all the grounds between the tower of Jafar Khān's garden and the dyke or wall raised for the security of the suburbs against the waters of a neighbouring lake. A deep ditch was added to the entrenchment, and the earth dug from it served to form a very good rampart without needing any mortar or brickwork. Towers were also raised at proper distances, and cannon placed; and every one

of them, with part of the intervening curtain, was entrusted to an officer at the head of his corps.\* The assault was delivered at daybreak and the entrenchments carried, but during the fight Mustafa Khān's elephant became unmanageable, and he left it for a charger. His troops, missing him from the howdah, imagined he was slain, were seized with panic, and fled to their camp. A distant cannonade was kept up for 7 days between the two armies, and the fight was then renewed. Mustafa Khān, wounded in the eye by an arrow, again retreated, and hearing that Ali Vardi Khān was marching to the relief of Patna, raised the siege.

Next year the Marāthās swept through the district and were joined by the rebellious Afghāns. Ali Vardi Khān hurried up from Murshidābād to Bankipore, made a forced march through Naubatpur to Mahābalipur, and there came up with the Marāthās. An indecisive battle took place, and after some days desultory fighting, Raghuji Bhonsla, the Marāthā chief, slipped by and marched off towards Bengal, Ali Vardi Khān following after him "over a country totally ruined."

Patna did not long enjoy the peace which the Marāthā retreat seemed to promise. In 1748 the Afghāns of Darbhanga opened negotiations with the Governor of Bihār, Zain-ud-dīn (or as he was also called Hāibat Jang), the son-in-law of Ali Vardi Khān, and marched to Patna. Here the Governor received them in *darbār*; but towards its conclusion they treacherously assassinated him, and then proceeded to commit various savage atrocities: in the words of the author of the *Riyazu-s-Salātin*, "they sacked the city and its suburbs, looted treasures, dishonoured women and children, and desolated a whole world." A vast number of Afghāns flocked to join them till their army numbered 40,000 horse, and as many foot, besides a large train of artillery. "All India," says the *Sair-ul-Mutākharin*, "being now in arms, and every part of it full of Afghāns, not a day passed, but the inhabitants of Azimābād had their attention roused and their fears awakened five or six times a day, by the sound of the *nakāra* or kettledrum; and on inquiry it was always found that this was occasioned by some Afghan commander who was coming to Shamsheer Khān's assistance with so many men. During all this time the city was a prey to all the horrors of sack and plunder. The general's people, being restrained by no discipline, nor overawed by any constraint, spread throughout every quarter of that unfortunate city, where not a day passed without some houses undergoing all the horrors of violence and defilement. Dishonouring whole

The sack  
of Patna.

\* *Sair-ul-Mutākharin* (Raymond's translation).

families became familiar; and few houses and few persons did escape the defiling hands of an unbridled soldiery, and the infamous practices of that nation of miscreants."

The Afghān triumph was short-lived, as Ali Vardi Khān advanced by forced marches with a large army. Never before, it is said, did a Bengal army march with the same speed as this force, which had learnt the tactics of rapid movement from the Marāthās and was composed of soldiers eager to avenge the outrages committed on their relatives. Ali Vardi Khān met the Afghāns at Rabi Sarai near the present railway station at Fatwā, and in spite of the fact that they had been joined by the Marāthās, signally defeated them. The revolt was effectually crushed, and the Afghāns of Darbhanga, with their leaders slain and their Marāthā allies in full retreat, did not again take up arms.

Rebellion  
of Sirāj-  
ud-daula.

The Viceroy was soon, however, forced to return to Patna by the rebellion of his favourite grandson, Sirāj-ud-daula, who in 1750 suddenly made his appearance there with the intention of assuming independent power. The Governor refused to deliver up the city to him, and Sirāj-ud-daula proceeded to storm the walls with a small following of 60 men. Some climbed the ramparts, others got in by a drain or watercourse and opened the gates to Sirāj-ud-daula. As soon, however, as the garrison came up, this handful of men was overpowered, and according to the Sair-ul-Mutākharrin, "Sirāj-ud-daula, who was a rank coward, turned bridle and fled full speed." He took refuge in a house in the suburbs, and on the arrival of Ali Vardi Khān, was reconciled to him and left for Murshidābād.

Invasion  
of Shāh  
Alam

In 1757 Mir Jafar Khān was raised by the English to the Nawābship of Bengal, and shortly afterwards came to Patna, escorted by a small force under Clive, who was accompanied by Mr. Amyatt and Mr. Watts. Here the Nawāb confirmed Rām Narāyan in the Deputy Governorship of Bihār, but offended the local Muhammadans by his carousals and the general levity of his conduct. He entertained *fakirs* and, like a good Musalmān, visited the tombs of the Muhammadan saints in the district; but on the other hand he spent most of his time with the dancing women of the city and for some days celebrated the Hindu *Holi* with great hilarity. Some of the nobles of Bihār, disgusted with the new regime, now opened negotiations with Ali Gauhar, afterwards known as the Emperor Shāh Alam, who in 1759 marched south to enforce his claims to the Province. Amyatt, the Agent, embarked with the rest of the English in some boats and dropped down the Ganges, leaving the factory in the charge of some trusty



sepoys. The Governor, finding that no help could be expected for some time from Mir Jafar or the English, at first professed allegiance to the young prince, but as soon as he got news of the approach of an English force, threw off the mask and defied Shah Alam. The latter then besieged the city and delivered an assault on the fort, but hearing that Clive was advancing and Shujā-ud-daula had treacherously seized the fort at Allahābād, he raised the siege and withdrew towards that place, the English force under Clive arriving after he had left.

According to Macaulay, "Shah Alam had invested Patna and was on the point of proceeding to storm, when he learned that the Colonel was advancing by forced marches. The whole army which was approaching consisted of only 450 Europeans and 2,500 sepoys. But Clive and his Englishmen were now objects of dread over all the East. As soon as his advanced guard appeared, the besiegers fled before him. In a few days this great army melted away before the mere terror of the English name." Unfortunately for the complete accuracy of this statement the young prince, who now assumed the title of Shah Alam on the death of his father, soon returned in full force and ravaged the whole country from Dāūd-nagar on the west to the environs of Bihār on the East. He encountered no opposition, for it was the rainy season, and the country being under water, the Governor and the English remained in their quarters at Patna. At last, a force moved out under Rām Narāyan and Captain Cochrane, and gave battle to Shah Alam's army. The battle, which took place on the banks of a small stream near Fatwā (probably at Mohsinpur), ended with the complete rout of the allied forces. Dr. Fullerton, the English surgeon, was the only English officer not killed; he spiked one gun and brought off another, and when the ammunition waggon was damaged, quietly stopped, mended it, and resumed his retreat with the small handful of men whom he had rallied.

The victory was, however, practically fruitless, for the Emperor neglected to follow it up by seizing Patna, and had almost immediately to meet a British force which marched up with a native army under Mir Jafar Khān's son Miran. In this battle, which took place near Bārhi, Miran's troops broke and fled, but the brisk cannonade of the English restored the fortunes of the day, and the Emperor made his escape to Bihār and struck south to Burdwan. Thence he again doubled back to Patna, where he was joined by the French adventurer Law, who had appeared a short time previously before the walls of Patna. On his approach the city was seized with panic, for its garrison consisted only of

a company of sepoys in the English factory and the broken troops that had escaped from the battle of Mohsinpur; and the latter "were too much disheartened by their wounds and their shameful defeat to stand the brunt of an eschade or an assault." Fortunately for Patna, Law was ignorant of its defenceless position, and marched by the trembling city to Bihâr, where he spent his time in manufacturing gunpowder and preparing for the campaign. On the arrival of the Emperor, a vigorous assault was made on the fort, but once again Patna was saved by the arrival of reinforcements under Major Knox, whose march to its relief was a brilliant exploit. At the head of only 200 Europeans in the stifling heat of May, he performed the march from Burdwan, a distance of 294 miles, in 13 days, himself marching on foot to encourage his men; and on the very night of his arrival reconnoitred the enemy's camp in person. Next day he attacked them at noon when the guards were off duty or negligent, and drove them from their works to which they never returned. He followed up this blow by defeating the Governor of Purnea at Hajipur, when he was moving with a large force to attack the city; and the safety of Patna was assured.

In 1761 the war ended with the defeat of the Emperor and Monsieur Law at Manpur near Gaya by an English force under Major Carnao. The Emperor came to terms and was escorted to Patna, where the English turned the Factory into an imperial hall of audience by hanging it with rich embroideries and converting a couple of dinner tables into a throne. Here with due ceremonial Shâh Alam was proclaimed Emperor of India and formally conferred upon Mir Kâsim Ali the Nawâbship of Bengal, Bihâr and Orissa.

The  
massacre  
of Patna.

The new Nawâb had gained his elevation by outbidding his predecessor, and as his performances fell short of his promises, endless quarrels ensued, which soon ended in a rupture. On the 23rd June 1763, a day when the English commemorated the anniversary of the battle of Plassey by a dinner in the Factory, news came that a force of 3,000 men with 6 guns was on the march to Patna, and as war seemed inevitable, Ellis, the Agent, resolved to strike the first blow. Accordingly, before dawn on the 24th the English force marched out and soon made themselves masters of the city except the fort and palace. Instead, however, of remaining on duty, Ellis, Carstairs, who commanded the troops, and the other European gentlemen, all went off to Bankipore to breakfast. The bulk of the army dispersed in search of plunder, and the few guards at the east gate were soon overpowered by the reinforcements which came in from Fatwâ. The day, which

began so auspiciously, ended in complete disaster, and most of the sepoys deserted laden with plunder. The English defended themselves for a day and a half in the Factory, and then decided to evacuate the place.

Retreat down the Ganges was impossible, for the Nawāb's headquarters at Monghyr lay between them and their friends, and they consequently resolved to find shelter in the Vizier of Oudh's territory. The rains had set in with great violence, and almost the whole country was under water; and when the English, worn out by fatigue and want of nourishment, had struggled as far as Mānjhi in the Sāran district, they were surrounded by a force under the Faujdār of Sāran, assisted by Somru, who had crossed over from Buxar. Though hopelessly handicapped by the want of guns and ammunition, they offered a brief but ineffectual resistance. One battalion charged with fixed bayonets and drove back the enemy, but the weary troops refused to follow them, and eventually the whole body laid down their arms. One small party escaped to Hajipur, where Carstairs died of a wound he received in the battle, and then were sent down to Monghyr, only to be brought back to Patna. There they were thrown into prison with their unfortunate companions, and their numbers were soon swelled by other prisoners from Monghyr, some being confined in the house of Hājī Ahmed and others in the Viceroy's old palace, the Chahalsatun.

In the meantime, the English in Bengal had not been idle, and had defeated the Nawāb's troops in three successive battles at Kātwa, Sūti and Udhua Nullah. Mir Kāsim left Monghyr, and came to Bārḥ, where he butchered the two Sets, the great bankers of Murshidābād; not content with their death, he had their bodies exposed under a guard of sepoys to beasts and birds of prey, that they might not be burned according to the rites of their religion. From Bārḥ he moved on to Patna, where he heard that the commandant of the fort at Monghyr had surrendered it to the English. Enraged at this bad news, he gave orders for the English prisoners to be massacred and entrusted this infamous work to the renegade Reinhardt, or as he is generally called Somru.

On the 5th October 1763, Somru came at 7 P.M. to Hājī Ahmed's house with two companies of sepoys, having first deprived the prisoners of their knives and forks on the pretence that he was himself going to give them dinner. He first sent for Ellis and Lushington (the latter possibly one of the few survivors of the Black Hole), who came without suspicion and were cut down as soon as they came out. Others were sent for and hacked

to pieces in the same manner, but one of them gave the alarm, and the survivors tried to defend themselves with bottles and plates. The sepoys were driven out, but returning with muskets, shot them down to the last man, and the bodies were then thrown into a well. In all, 49 Europeans were butchered in this place.

The prisoners in the Chahalsatun lingered on for nearly a week in expectation of the same fate. Efforts were made to save them, but in vain, for Mir Kásim turned a deaf ear to all intercession, and on the 11th October gave orders to Somru to make an end of them. We have no precise particulars of their death, but it appears that they were shot down sixty at a time, and that the native commanders refused to undertake the hideous task, one of them replying with some spirit that he could not kill unarmed prisoners and that Mir Kásim might send his sweepers to do such work. Of all the prisoners Dr. Fullerton was the only person spared, owing to some services he had rendered the Nawab; on the 25th October he succeeded in bribing his guard and escaping to Hajipur. According to the Sair-ul-Mutakharin, the number of those massacred was 198, a larger number than perished in the Black Hole of Calcutta.\*

Final conquest of Patna.

An avenging force soon hurried up under Major Adams, and laid siege to Patna. The garrison of the citadel made a gallant defence, and in one successful sally carried the batteries; but the siege operations were quickly pushed on by Major Knox, and on the 6th November 1763 the citadel was taken by storm. Mir Kásim fled and took refuge with Shujā-ud-daula, the Vizier of Oudh, but returned with him in April and invested the city with a large army. On the 3rd May Shujā-ud-daula made an attack on the English forces under Major Carnac, but after fighting all day, was repulsed, and the armies then remained inactive till the 30th May, when he raised the siege and retreated towards Maner. On the 23rd October 1764, the campaign terminated with the decisive battle of Buxar, which finally made the British undisputed masters of the Lower Provinces of Bengal.

THE MUTINY.

The most notable event in the subsequent history of Patna was the Mutiny of 1857. At that time the adjoining station of Dinapore was garrisoned by one European regiment, the 10th foot, by 3 regiments of Native Infantry, the 7th, 8th and 40th, and by one company of European and another company of Native Artillery. The station and military division were commanded by General Lloyd, an officer who had done good service in his day and ha-

\* The above account has been compiled from the Sair-ul-Mutakharin as an article by Mr. Beveridge. *The Patna Massacre*, Calcutta Review, Vol. LXXI, 1884, in which the contemporary accounts are given.

been selected by Lord Dalhousie to suppress the Santal insurrection in 1854. He was now an old man; his service had been passed chiefly among sepoys; and he was reluctant to doubt the experience of 40 years and distrust the men who had given constant proofs of their devotion to the Company. Patna itself was a centre of Muhammadan intrigue; and even as late as 1846 its seditious Musadmans had endeavoured to take advantage of our balanced fortunes on the banks of the Sutlej, and had succeeded in corrupting some of the native officers and sepoys at Dinapore. On the 7th June Tayler, the Commissioner, heard that the troops at Dinapore were expected to rise that night, and collected the Europeans at his house, the Chajju Bagh. The sepoys, however, postponed the rising, as letters, in which they announced their intention and invited the police to seize the treasury and march out to meet them, were delivered to the wrong persons. In the morning there arrived a reinforcement of Sikhs under Rattray, and the tension was relieved.

Tayler now determined to strike at the root of disaffection by arresting the three Maulvis who were at the head of the Patna branch of Wahabis, and on the 18th June invited them with a few of the most respectable citizens to his house to discuss the situation. "Next morning all were assembled in his dining-room and took their seats round the table. Presently the Commissioner, accompanied by Rattray, a few other Englishmen, and a native officer, entered the room. Two of the Maulvis looked very uncomfortable when Rattray, with his sword clanking, sat down beside them: but their leader, Maulvi Ahmed Ullah, soon began to take part in the conversation, and made some sensible suggestions for the defence of the city. At length the conference was over; and all the native guests, except the Maulvis, were told that they might go. Turning to the Maulvis, Tayler informed them that he was obliged to detain them as hostages for the good behaviour of their followers, and handed them over to the custody of Rattray." Next day he followed up this stroke by requiring the citizens to surrender their arms and remain indoors after 9 p. m. These orders were quietly obeyed.

The peace of the city was soon broken. On the 3rd July some 60 or 70 Muhammadans, with drums beating and the green flag of their faith waving, rushed to attack the Roman Catholic church in the heart of the city. Rattray's Sikhs were at once ordered to the spot, but Dr. Lyell, the Opium Assistant, being well mounted and thinking that his presence would overawe the rioters, rode on

\* T. R. E. Holes, *History of the Indian Mutiny* (1891).



in advance. As he approached, several shots were fired at him and he fell mortally wounded. The moment was critical. The sight of blood had aroused the evil spirits of the populace and their numbers were increasing, when at this moment the Sikhs arrived, rushed with a ready will on the crowd of fanatics, and quickly dispersed them. Next morning the city was thoroughly searched, and in the house of a book-seller named Pîr Ali were found letters indicating the existence of a widespread conspiracy. The ringleaders were seized and brought to trial, and 14 were hanged the same afternoon; among others Wari Ali, a native police officer, on whom treasonable correspondence had been found, who went to the gallows crying: "To the rescue, all friends of the king of Delhi."

In the meantime, Tayler had been urging General Lloyd to disarm the sepoys at Dinapore, and at last the General reluctantly decided upon a half measure. Two companies of an English regiment, the 37th foot, had arrived; and with their support, he decided to take away the percussion caps of the sepoys. On the morning of the 25th he paraded the European troops and artillery, and sent 2 bullock carts to the magazine to bring the percussion caps to the English quarters. As they passed the sepoy lines on their return journey, the sepoys broke their ranks and rushed forward, one shouting "Kill the Sahibs. Don't let the caps be taken." They were with difficulty pacified by their officers and forced to abstain from any further demonstration; the men returned sullenly to their posts, and the carts went on. All was now supposed to be over, the Europeans were dismissed to their lines, and the General, congratulating himself on the success of his manœuvre, went to lunch on board one of the steamers, which had that morning arrived.

It had been previously arranged that in the event of any disturbance two musket shots in quick succession should be fired by the European guard at the hospital. At half past one, the sound of these was heard; instantly the 10th foot, the two companies of the 37th foot, which had arrived the day before, and the artillery turned out. It appeared that, before going on board the steamer, the General had issued an order that the caps actually in the possession of the sepoys should be given up. But these latter, when called upon to obey, had fired upon their officers. When the Europeans came within sight of their lines, all was uproar and confusion, but a few shots from the Enfield rifles of the 30th, who were in advance, and a sharp fire opened upon the sepoys from the roof of the hospital, soon cleared the scene. The sepoys made off with precipitation, leaving behind them the greater part

of their property. The Europeans followed them up to the limits of the cantonments, burning their lines as they advanced, and then halted, as there was no one to give orders, no general, and no one ready to take the responsibility. A few of the sepoys endeavoured to cross the Ganges in boats, but the steamer at the *ghat* opened fire upon them with considerable effect. The main body, therefore, took their way towards the Son river in the direction of Arrah, where they joined the rebel Kuar Singh.

An ill-fated attempt was now made to atone for the error of letting these men join the rebels with all their arms and accoutrements and to relieve the beleaguered garrison at Arrah. A steamer which was sent up the river on the 27th July, stuck on a sand-bank. Another steamer was started on the 29th; but the expedition was grossly mismanaged. The troops were landed at 7 p.m., and fell into an ambuscade about midnight. When the morning dawned, a disastrous retreat had to be commenced. Out of the 400 men who had left Dinapore fully half were left behind; and of the survivors only about 50 returned unwounded.

On the 4th August Mr. Tayler was removed from the Commissionership, Mr. Samuells being appointed in his place, and 200 British soldiers and 2 guns were sent to protect the city. This force was strong enough to overawe the disaffected, but from the moment that the rebels got the upper hand in Gorakhpur, the country round Patna had no peace. Bands of mutineers roamed at will over the country, destroyed public buildings, and levied tribute. These raids, however, did not produce any general rising, and were merely local disturbances. "The people of Patna," remarked the Lieutenant-Governor, "had before them the spectacle of the neighbouring district of Shāhābad for weeks in the occupation of the rebels, the Gayā district overrun by marauding parties, and Government thānas and private property destroyed within a few miles of Patna itself; yet with a merely nominal garrison the city was as quiet as in a time of profound peace."

Few districts possess such a wealth of remains of archaeological interest; for each of the three old capitals, Rājgir, Bihār and Patna, contains monuments of past greatness, and there are numerous ancient remains elsewhere. The district was the birth-place of Jāiniśm and of Buddhism, but with the exception of the Sombhandār cave at Rājgir dating back to the third century B.C., there are no Jain relics with any claims to antiquity.

\* Minute on the Mutinies in Lower Bengal by Sir Frederick Halliday.

The above account has been compiled mainly from *The Mutiny of the Bengal Army* (1857-58) and Holmes' *History of the Indian Mutiny* (1891).

Buddhist relics, though frequently reduced to mere heaps of bricks are far more plentiful, owing to the fact that the Buddhist religion continued to flourish until finally swept away by the Muhammadans at the end of the 12th century. The oldest remains of ascertained date are at Rājgir, Patna and Giriak. At the former place are the walls and ramparts of the capital of the Saisanāga kings and cave dwellings dating back to the time of Buddha; and at Patna are numerous remains of the ancient Pātaliputra, including portions of the wooden walls and towers of the city described by Megasthenes and of Asoka's splendid palace. Pātaliputra itself lies buried deep beneath the surface, partly to the south of the East Indian Railway line and partly under the modern towns of Patna and Bankipore, but very interesting remains have been brought to light by Colonel Waddell. On the hills near Giriak there is a great Buddhist stūpa singularly well preserved, besides a cave used by Buddha and the ruins of an ancient monastery. A brick mound at Bhagwānganj has been identified with the famous Drona stūpa erected over the ashes of Buddha; and other Buddhistic remains are found at Ghosrāwān, Tetrāwān and Telārha; at Bihār are the remains of the old Buddhist monastery or *Vihāra*, from which the town derives its name, besides some sandstone pillars of the time of the Gupta empire; and numerous mounds at Bargāon bury the ancient buildings of the Buddhist university of Nālanda. The monastery of Vikramasila, another seat of Buddhist learning in the days of the Pāla kings (800—1200 A.D.), has disappeared, but the stones of its buildings have been used to erect more modern structures at Silāo. To the same period may be ascribed the numerous images still to be seen in many villages grouped under a banyan or sacred *pipal* tree. They are both Buddhistic and Brahmanical, and afford a good illustration of the connection between the two sects, which seems to have culminated in an intermixture of both, as Buddhism became more and more Hinduized.

The most interesting monuments of a later age are found at Patna, Bihār, Hilsā and Maner. Modern Patna is exclusively Muhammadan, but contains buildings dating back to the time of Sher Shāh, its founder. The period of Muhammadan domination is marked both here and in Bihār town by numerous mosques and tombs, among the latter being some fine specimens of sepulchral architecture. At Hilsā there is an ancient tomb of a Muhammadan saint; and at Maner the shrine of Shāh Daulat with its exquisite sandstone carvings is one of the finest examples of the architecture of the Mughal period.

A detailed account of the remains of archaeological interest at each of the places mentioned above will be found in Chapter XVI.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE PEOPLE.

PRIOR to 1872 there was no regular census of the people, but several rough estimates of the number of the inhabitants had been made. Thus, Dr. Buchanan Hamilton, who in 1812 made a survey of the district of Bihār, on a rough calculation, estimated the population of the nine police circles which nearly correspond with the present district at 1,308,270 souls. In 1837 the population, for the area of 1,836 square miles which then comprised the district, was returned at 845,790; in 1857 it was stated in round numbers as 1,200,000; this figure was subsequently reduced, and the official statistics published before the first census showed the population as 900,000 for an area of 2,101 square miles.

GROWTH  
OF THE  
POPULA-  
TION.  
Early  
estimates.

The result of the census of 1872 was to disclose a total population of 1,559,517 persons in the present district area, but there is little doubt that this first census was wanting in accuracy and completeness. In 1881 it was found that the number of inhabitants had risen to 1,756,196 or by 12·6 per cent., but this apparent increase was probably due in some measure to defective enumeration in 1872. The census of 1891 showed that the population was practically stationary, being returned at 1,773,410 or only 0·9 per cent. more than that recorded in 1881.

Census of  
1872, 1881  
and 1891.

According to the census of 1901, the total population was 1,624,985, the net result being a decrease of 148,425 or 8·4 per cent. as compared with 1891. This decrease was largely due to the fact that plague was raging at the time when the census was taken. The inhabitants were in a wild state of alarm; most of the people whose homes were in other districts had fled; and wherever the disease broke out, those who did not go away altogether removed *en masse* to temporary sheds in their fields. Even if the census staff had escaped the general panic and the ravages of the disease, the work of enumerating a population that was constantly on the move would have been a very difficult task. But they did not escape. Many of them were stricken, and many, fled, often at the last moment when it was next to impossible to replace them and to prepare afresh the preliminary record, which as often as not had disappeared. Everything possible was done to overcome these difficulties, and in the places where the

Census of  
1901.